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ARRANGEMENT AND BINDING OF BRITISH BLUE BOOKS

BY WILLIAM TEAL, *Superintendent of Delivery, The John Crerar Library, Chicago*

In presenting this paper I realize that there are perhaps not very many libraries subscribing for the British Parliamentary Papers, but from the inquiries that we have received concerning them I judge the number is increasing and I am informed that trouble is met in keeping these papers arranged so that they may be of use before being bound. Therefore I have been asked to prepare this paper with the hope that by explaining the arrangement at the John Crerar Library aid may be extended in solving these difficulties.

To those who are not familiar with the British Blue Books, as the Parliamentary Papers are commonly known, let me explain that they are in two series, namely: Sessional Papers of the House of Lords and Sessional Papers of the House of Commons. The former are composed of the House of Lords Papers and Bills and Papers by Command. The latter consist of House of Commons Reports and Papers, House of Commons Bills and Papers by Command. The Papers by Command are listed in each series as they are presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of His Majesty. Each division of each series has a distinct method of numbering, as for instance the House of Lords Papers and Bills have their numbers enclosed in parentheses, the House of Commons Bills have the word "Bill" preceding the number, the House of Commons Reports and Papers have the number only, and the Papers by Command have "Cd" preceding the number and the whole enclosed in brackets. Since this paper was written some of the 1919 Sessional Papers arrived and I notice they have changed the "Cd" to "Cmd." The Papers by Command are numbered continuously through several sessions until they reach five figures, or the sovereign changes, when they begin to renumber from one. The other divisions renumber for each session. Having learned this method of

numbering one can tell at a glance when seeing a paper to which series and division it belongs.

A check list is published monthly and quarterly. Each quarterly list cumulates from the beginning of the year so that the last quarterly list is the check list for the year.

These are shelved at the delivery desk in the reading room. As soon as the papers are received they are arranged in order according to the series and division for checking. In going over them I watch for reports of committees and royal commissions, or bills which I think may be called for, and turn them over to the reference librarians that they may make note of them. Just at present we are making note of all the reports from the Ministry of Reconstruction. The Fisher Educational Bill is very much in demand at present writing. These reports and bills are kept near the delivery desk so that they are easily accessible when wanted.

After the papers are checked they are taken to the shelves and placed in boxes which are specially made for them. These boxes are made of light wood and are 34¼ inches long, 9½ inches wide and 13½ inches high with two partitions inside. You will readily see from these dimensions that a box will just fill a shelf and accommodate the quarto size papers. The front side of the box is hinged at the bottom with a flap on the top of the box to keep it in place when the box is closed. In shelving the papers in the boxes they are arranged in numerical order exactly as they appear in the check list, with space left for those papers reserved at the delivery desk. The boxes are then labeled with the first and last number of the series and division.

The papers cannot be bound until the title pages, tables of content, and the in-

dexes have arrived, which is generally about a year and a half after the close of the session. The volumes are then made up and sent to the bindery. The index forms the last volume of each series.

As was stated in the beginning, the Papers by Command are printed in each series, but, as we subscribe for only one set, they are bound in the House of Lords series. If not called for by the House of Lords Index, the paper is inserted in its place in the House of Commons series. There are not more than three or four Papers by Command that are not bound in the House of Lords series. In the table of contents of those volumes of the House of Commons series from which the Papers by Command are missing a written reference in red ink is made to those volumes of the House of Lords series that contain the missing papers. A printed pink slip is also inserted in front of each table of contents in which such reference is made, explaining the reference. Because of these missing Papers by Command and in order to make volumes of sufficient size it is frequently necessary to run several volumes of the House of Commons series into one. When all the papers of a volume are missing the table of contents is bound with the preceding volume. In two or three of the volumes an octavo is bound with the quarto, but

in general the octavo volumes are separated from the quarto.

After the books are returned from the bindery they are turned over to the card department to be sent to the classifiers for Library of Congress analyticals. They are then shelved and when the cards are filed in the public catalog the Blue Books are in demand.

The Catalog of Parliamentary Papers, 1801-1900, and its Supplement, 1901-1910, published by King & Son, is of great assistance in locating material in the Blue Books. It would be a great help, though, if the number of the paper and the year were given in this catalog instead of the year only. Each item is numbered and placed in brackets which at first glance makes one think it is a Paper of Command.

Before drawing this to a close let me call to your attention that often a paper is called a Blue Book when it does not belong to the Parliamentary Papers but to the official publications which are issued by the official branches of the government such as the Home Office, the Admiralty and the Board of Trade. A monthly and quarterly check list of these is issued, similar to the Parliamentary Papers. Sometimes an official publication is made a Parliamentary Paper and in such cases the number of the paper is given in the check list.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HORTICULTURE *

By MARJORIE F. WARNER, *Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.*

Horticultural bibliography has two important phases: (a) Study of works concerning the cultivation of fruits, flowers, and vegetables, and of plants in relation to landscape, constituting what we call horticultural literature; and (b) collection of data on the history or origins of the plants and processes of horticulture, whether in works of the preceding group, or gleaned from the most diverse sources—travel, biography, general history, manuscripts, old

newspapers, and what not—a form of research no less vital than the other, though less frequently undertaken by librarians, and requiring, moreover, selective and critical faculties of a very high order.

Bibliographical work in connection with horticulture has been greatly neglected. The most comprehensive bibliography of the literature is the third section of Séguier's "Bibliotheca botanica" (Lugduni Batavorum, 1740); not that this contains the largest number of titles, as there are

*Abridgment of paper.